



JOSEPH R. BIDEN, III
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
820 NORTH FRENCH STREET
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE 19801

CONTACT JASON MILLER
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
PHONE (302) 577-8949
CELL (302) 893-8939
Jason.Miller@state.de.us

Media Release

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Biden Applauds Permanent Ban of Designer Drug Known as “Bath Salts”

Legislation signed into law today expands definition of designer drugs to address new substances developed in the future

Wilmington – Attorney General Beau Biden today applauded the enactment of Senate Bill 160 which permanently bans dangerous hallucinogenic substances commonly known as “bath salts.” Bath salts, which are marketed under names such as “Ivory Wave,” “Purple Wave,” “Vanilla Sky” or “Bliss,” can mimic the effects of cocaine, LSD, MDMA or methamphetamine. Law enforcement and medical professionals have reported that these drugs cause agitation, paranoia, hallucinations, [chest pain](#), and suicidal tendencies. In some cases the suicidal urges come back days after the drug is consumed. The bill, which was introduced earlier this month by Senator Bethany Hall-Long, was signed into law by Governor Markell today.

“In order to protect the public we’ve got to stay one step ahead of the criminals that develop these poisonous substances,” Attorney General Biden stated. “This new law not only permanently bans “bath salts”, but also more than a dozen chemicals that could be used to produce new versions of these dangerous mind-altering drugs. I applaud Senator Hall-Long for her leadership in developing this legislation and thank the General Assembly and the Governor for working so quickly to enact this bill.”

The law makes permanent a temporary state ban on “bath salts” and bans 17 chemical compounds that experts have determined have a high potential for abuse and have no accepted medical use in treatment. Under the law, criminal offenses for the possession and distribution of “bath salts” and other designer drugs include Possession, Aggravated Possession, and Possession with the Intent to Distribute. The seriousness of the charge and penalty increases when aggravating factors are present, such as prior offenses, resisting arrest, the offense involves a juvenile, was committed in a vehicle, or occurred near a school, park, or church. In addition, the law adds these substances to the “tier quantity” section of the State’s drug statute which also enhances applicable penalties. Depending on the aggravating circumstance and weights possessed (tiers), charges can result in minimum mandatory jail time and carry a sentence of up to 25 years in prison.

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